



Los Angeles County
Mental Health Wellness Magazine

Minds & Matters

SUMMER 2012

In This Issue

Dr. Southard

Employee
Recognition

Grand Opening
for MHSA-Funded
Epworth Apartments

Around the World
for Mental Health
Awareness

DMH News

A Final Thought



SIXTH ANNUAL CONNECTIONS FOR LIFE CONFERENCE

The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) and the Mental Health Commission hosted the sixth annual Connections for Life through Employment and Education Conference at the California Endowment in downtown Los Angeles on Wednesday, April 18th. About 300 people attended the day-long conference that empowers and encourages consumers to find work or continue their education.

Throughout the day, conference attendees heard consumer success stories, went to workshops and received information from various resource booths on how to achieve their career and education goals. Makeover transformation videos were shown of Phyllis Coto, John Czernek, Isaiah Hinnerichs and Nami Roberts. They were the honored recipients of this year's makeovers, designed to help them dress for success.

Along with the consumer panels, workshops and raffles, special recognition and awards were handed out at the end of the day, recognizing specific people for their outstanding work:

Consumer Artist – Nereida “Nettie” Vasquez was recognized for designing the conference logo.

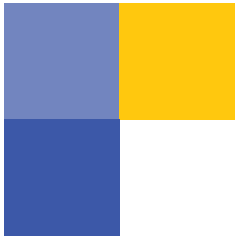
Distinguished Employer – Vons supermarkets accepted this award for employing more than ten Valley Employment Services (VES) consumers.

Distinguished Consumer – Felipe Lorenzo received this award, highlighting his achievements in employment and education.

hope
wellness
recovery

dmh.lacounty.gov





Minds & Matters

From Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W., Director
Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health



Happy New (Fiscal) Year

Our new fiscal year is beginning with its share of fireworks. We are processing the implications of the Supreme Court's decisions on the Affordable Care Act. We are trying to figure out the switches and curves that have been thrown our way in the new State Budget while also struggling to incorporate the changes that the "new" realignment brings to our programs, including the way that the Mental Health Services Act will be governed in the future. All of this, I guess, gets filed under the heading of "Change Is Our Friend".

But what I would like us to think about today are the things that don't change. One constant that we need to keep in the front of our consciousness is that whatever storms may be going on in our immediate environment, our main job remains the same. Our primary responsibility is now – and always has been – making sure that those who come to us for assistance for their mental illness receive the best care possible so their lives are better because our programs exist. We use the phrase *Hope, Wellness and Recovery* to describe that commitment, but even if the slogan changes, the commitment will not change.

There is yet another constant: the ability of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) to help people depends primarily on the quality, concern and dedication of our staff. LACDMH has accomplished some truly remarkable things in the last few years, and we are poised to do some even more amazing things in this coming fiscal year, but none of this happens without your work, your caring, and your intelligence. So let's pop the (non-alcoholic) champagne and celebrate the New Year of challenge and change.

Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.

hope *wellness*
recovery



Employee Recognition

Retired

May 2012

Eleanor Mondorf, 38 yrs
Norman Luce, 10 yrs
Marsha Brandon, 32 yrs
Carey Temple, 13 yrs
Shawki Haffar, 22 yrs
Rosalie Esquibel, 41 yrs

June 2012

John Alexander, 10 yrs
Lynn Rostedt, 11 yrs
Jacqueline Yukawa,
10 yrs
Anthony Chavez, 24 yrs



LACDMH CELEBRATES OUTSTANDING NURSES

Approximately 100 Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) nurses, staff and dignitaries attended the LACDMH Spring Gala and Awards Ceremony on Tuesday, May 8, 2012, to celebrate achievement in the nursing profession.

Presented by the LACDMH Nursing Professional Concerns Committee (NPCC), the luncheon and awards ceremony recognized many outstanding nurses, including R. Scott Telford, R.N., M.S.N., from South Bay Mental Health Center, who was named Outstanding Nurse of the Year. Scott currently works as Sr. Mental Health Counselor at the Twin Towers Correctional Facility and as Supervisor at the South Bay Mental Health Center.

Nominees included:

- Katy Ihrig, RN, AA, Santa Clarita Mental Health Center
- Kim Kleinschmidt, RN, MSN, Older Adult Services
- Leo Magilit, RN, BSN, PMRT
- Marsha Watanabe, RN, BSN, Managed Care
- Myrna Cauquiran, RN, BSN, South Bay Mental Health Center
- Tamika Merriwether, RN, MSN, Palmdale Mental Health Center



SHARON HUGGINS RECEIVES COPING WITH HOPE 2012 AWARD

On Thursday, May 17th, Sharon Huggins, RN, NP, was presented with the Coping with Hope 2012 Award. Huggins works at the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, HIV Mental Health Service. She received the award in front of her peers during the Coping with Hope 2012 symposium, hosted by the Los Angeles HIV Mental Health Task Force.

David Martin, Ph.D., Chief Psychologist and Director of Training/ Psychology Division at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, spoke highly of Huggins and her 17 years of dedicated service as a psychiatric nurse practitioner: "For Sharon, care for her patients doesn't stop with providing psychotropic medication. She knows her patients extraordinarily well and takes the time to ensure that they get the care they need in addition to whatever psychiatric service she provides. She is a fountain of information about services in the community and is always on the look out for more."



GRAND OPENING FOR MHSA-FUNDED EPWORTH APARTMENTS

BY KAREN ZARSADIAZ-IGE, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER II

On Friday, April 20, 2012, legislators and community leaders gathered to celebrate the grand opening of the Epworth Apartments at 6525 Normandie Avenue in South Los Angeles. Nearly 200 people attended this long-awaited event, including Congresswoman Maxine Waters, Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas and Los Angeles City Councilman Bernard Parks.

"This is what we've dreamed about: permanent supportive housing. This (the Epworth Apartments) is what permanent supportive housing is all about and what we're all working for," Congresswoman Waters said to the audience. "We're pleased and proud to see this happen."

The Little Tokyo Service Center Community Development Corporation (LTSC CDC) hosted the grand opening event of the Epworth Apartments. Developed with the help of funds from the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), the Epworth Apartments are a new housing community that provides 19 units of affordable housing for Transition Age Youth (TAY) who are homeless and have a severe emotional disorder or mental illness. On-site supportive services will be available for the residents, including help for medical needs, education and job placement. The building is equipped with a community room, an outdoor courtyard and counseling rooms.

"I'm so proud of our (the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health/LACDMH) contribution to this that made this possible," stated LACDMH Director, Marvin Southard, D.S.W. "Nothing happens in L.A. without partnership. This (the Epworth Apartments) is a down payment for 50 more partnerships and projects in the future!"

In Their Own Words



AROUND THE WORLD FOR MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS BY KATHLEEN PICHÉ, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE DIRECTOR

Thirty eight year-old Wayne Cho stood confidently in the hot morning sun wearing running shorts, running shoes and a t-shirt that read "I have anxiety." A Chinese-Canadian long distance runner and person diagnosed with bipolar and anxiety disorders, Cho described his current mission of running 26,000 kilometers around the world in an attempt to inspire others to speak up about mental health. Approximately fifty staff, clients and news media were on hand to ask Cho questions about his adventure and his recovery process at the Asian Pacific Counseling and Treatment Center (APCTC), an LACDMH provider, on Friday, April 27, 2012.

Elvie Quintos, RN, MN, Program Director of Adult Specialized Rehabilitation, APCTC Wilshire Center, was happy to have Cho at the center, "I think this is inspiring for clients and staff, we want to support him. No Asian wants to admit to having a mental illness."

Cho sold all his belongings to fund a 5,400 mile run across Canada to raise awareness of depression and anxiety. When he completed that, he embarked upon a dream to run from North America to Australia. He started in Vancouver, Canada, this past January, working his way down the west coast to Los Angeles. The distance he covers ranges between 20-25 miles per day.

"I envision a sweeping transformation to how mental illness is perceived and I dream of a revolutionized health care system... where the world sees mental illness as simply a fact of life," Cho said.

A Chinese-born son of farmers, seven-year-old Wayne was expected to do his share when his father went to South America to seek greater fortune. Wayne, his sister and his mother stayed behind, plowing their four acres with an ox. His mother beat and neglected Wayne; he identifies this time as when his mental health first started deteriorating. He dreamt of the day he could

reunite with his father and he could find happiness. He was eleven when the family was reunited in South America but his father had changed, he was smoking and drinking and just as abusive as his mother had been in China. "My anxiety got really bad, my mind just shut down ... I wanted to protect my brain from pain," he said. The family was broken.

It wasn't until Cho was fourteen that he, his mother and brother moved to Canada where he saw others as happy, with better relationships. He told his mother he wanted a better relationship and they began to work on it. At thirty, Cho went back to school, sought treatment and received a diagnosis. He found ways to handle symptoms; running provided relief from his stress.

Cho is now able to identify triggers of his illness, like not sleeping well and being stressed out. When he's nervous, he's sure to take care of himself by eating and sleeping well. "Just like when you're physically tired, you need to be aware and address what's happening," he said. Physical symptoms like stomach aches and lack of sleep went away when he ran.

He admits to being a wallflower before becoming a marathon runner. "I used to be totally focused on my symptoms, I wasn't even aware of people around me." Now, he loves meeting and being around people. "Through recovery, I came to find love and strength within myself. Human resiliency is within every one of us."

"I believe in the true spirit and strength that lies within every one of us and I believe that the bond we share will help us achieve our dream," Cho said. "Together we can make a world of difference."

You can learn more about Wayne Cho and his dream at <http://www.lovetoworldrun.com/>.

LACDMH CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST SAM KEO RECEIVES MULTIPLE AWARDS

On Friday, April 6, 2012, the Los Angeles County Cambodian Employees Association (LACCEA) held its annual awards night in Long Beach at the Hak Heang Restaurant. This year, LACCEA recognized Samuel Keo, Psy.D., for all the contributions he's made in his field and his efforts to help the Cambodian community. Dr. Keo is a licensed psychologist with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH).

Dr. Keo was among three honorees being recognized this year by LACCEA. The other two were Sheryl Spiller from the Department of Public Social Services and Commander Billy Quach (ret.) of the Long Beach Police Department.

"We had a wonderful time at the awards ceremony," said Dr. Keo. "It was one of the proudest moments in my life."

At the awards ceremony, LACDMH District Chief (SA8), Kim Sasaki, commended Dr. Keo for all his hard work and dedication. LACCEA selected Dr. Keo because of his community service and his efforts to share his personal story to help others. Recently, Dr. Keo published a memoir, *Out of the Dark – Into the Garden of Hope*.

In addition to the LACCEA recognition, Dr. Keo also received a Los Angeles County scroll commending him for his service, an award from John Chiang, the California State Controller, and a special certificate from Congresswoman Laura Richardson from the 37th District.

LACDMH PARTICIPATES IN PUBLIC HEALTH EXPO 2012

The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) took part in National Public Health Week 2012 by hosting a booth at the Department of Public Health's (DPH) Health Expo. This year's theme was "A Healthier LA County Begins Today". The event took place on Thursday, April 5th at Olvera Street in downtown's La Plaza Park.

This year's event was co-hosted by DPH and the City of Los Angeles to reach hundreds of the area's residents and help spread the word on ways to prevent disease and live longer and healthier lives. Health Expo 2012 attendees were able to receive information and free health screenings for asthma, allergy, blood sugar and cholesterol. There were also cooking demonstrations and a live music therapy session with *Drumming for Your Life* founder, Steven Angel.

"This is the first year the City of Los Angeles and the County of Los Angeles have collaborated for this," said Chris Ipsen, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator II with the City of Los Angeles. Ipsen served as the Master of Ceremonies at the expo. "It's a monumental event."

More than 40 booths from throughout Los Angeles County provided information, resources, health screenings and demonstrations for healthy living, including LACDMH, DPH, Children's Hospital of Los Angeles, Red Cross, Southern California Edison and a variety of other city and county departments and community agencies.

LACDMH community workers (Yolanda Avitia, Ana Barrientos and Wendy Deleon) handed out resources and information pamphlets on the services the department provides its residents.

hope wellness recovery

LACDMH Mission

Enriching lives through partnerships designed to strengthen the community's capacity to support recovery and resiliency.

Our Values

Integrity: We conduct ourselves professionally according to the highest ethical standards.

Respect: We recognize the uniqueness of every individual and treat all people in a way that affirms their personal worth and dignity.

Accountability: We take responsibility for our choices and their outcomes.

Collaboration: We work together toward common goals by partnering with the whole community, sharing knowledge, building strong consensus, and sharing decision-making.

Dedication: We will do whatever it takes to improve the lives of our clients and communities.

Transparency: We openly convey our ideas, decisions and outcomes to ensure trust in our organization.

Quality and Excellence: We identify the highest personal, organizational, professional and clinical standards and commit ourselves to achieving those standards by continually improving every aspect of our performance.



Los Angeles County
Department of Mental Health
is dedicated to partnering with
clients, families and communities
to create hope, wellness and recovery.



<http://dmh.lacounty.gov>

Los Angeles County
Board Of Supervisors

William T Fujioka,
Chief Executive Officer
Gloria Molina, First District
Mark Ridley-Thomas,
Second District
Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman, Third
District
Don Knabe, Fourth District
Michael D. Antonovich, Fifth District

Los Angeles County
Mental Health Commission

Terry G. Lewis, MS, Exec. Director
Larry Gasco, PhD, LCSW - Chairman
Jerry Lubin, AICP - Vice Chair
Delores Huffman - Secretary
Frank C. Baron - CALMHB/C Rep.
Barry Perrou, PsyD – Member-at-
Large
Victoria A. Sofro – Member-at-Large
Howard Askins, MD, JD
George Caballero, LCSW
Judy A. Cooperberg, MS CPRP
Herman L. DeBose, PhD
Arnold L. Gilberg, MD, PhD
Hayward McNeill, MPH
Ilean Rabens, MA
Carlos Sosa, MSW
Greg Thompson, LCSW

Los Angeles County
Department of Mental Health

550 South Vermont Ave., 6th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90020
<http://dmh.lacounty.gov>

Director: Marvin J. Southard, DSW
Editor-in-Chief: Kathleen Piché,
PIO Director
Contributors: Karen Zarsadiaz-Ige,
PIO II, Kimberli Washington, ITC/
PIO, Vienna To, ITC/PIO

Minds & Matters is published by the
Los Angeles County
Department of Mental Health.
For article ideas and submissions,
e-mail kpiche@dmh.lacounty.gov
or fax to (213) 381-8361.



A Final Thought



CERTAINTY – DOES IT MAKE US HAPPIER?

By Kathleen Piché, L.C.S.W., Public Information Office Director

How many times have you had a conversation with someone else or with yourself about what has happened in the past and said, *If I had known what was going to happen, I'd have done things differently?* If you're like most humans, you probably want to know what's going to happen to you. Not knowing can create anxiety and worry, so if we were more certain about our future, we would not have that anxiety, right? But, would knowing what our future brings really be a good thing? Would knowing our fate make us happier?

Researchers say no. In a series of (what the authors claim as) first-ever studies by *Bar-Anan, Wilson, & Gilbert* (2009), feelings of uncertainty were shown to heighten positive and negative experiences respectively. In their study, the authors show that **uncertainty intensifies affective reactions** (our positive and negative experiences). So, if you know that you are going to get a brand new car for your birthday and do, you won't actually be as happy about it as if you did not know that you would get the new wheels. Conversely, if you thought you'd get the car for sure and didn't, you'd be more upset about the outcome than if you weren't certain you'd get such a grand gift.

The authors demonstrated that the uncertainty of events actually has more to do with how we feel about them. They also mention that there is a down side to trying to recreate a pleasant outcome, what researchers call *Wilson's Pleasure Paradox*. This occurs when you repeat what you've done before, expecting the same outcome. If it works, you will not get the same amount of pleasure as you did the first time around. The paradox occurs because you tend to reduce uncertainty and increase certainty. By doing so you may reduce the pleasure you get from the same positive event because now you feel more certain.

The bottom line is this: uncertainty enhances our experiences, making the pleasant experiences more pleasant and the unpleasant even more unpleasant. So, if you don't know what will happen and want to ensure that a negative outcome won't upset you, prepare yourself – you may want to create a "Plan B." On the other hand, if the positive outcome occurs, you will be happier about it. So, being certain isn't all it's cracked up to be. Being certain of that makes me happier already!